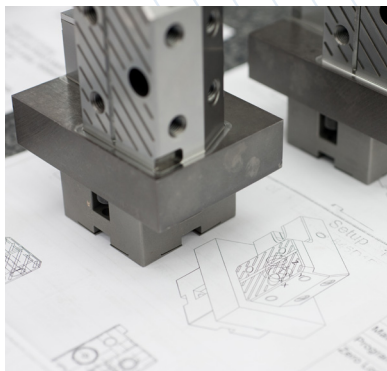


NORTH DAKOTA

Making an Impact on U.S. Manufacturing
MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP



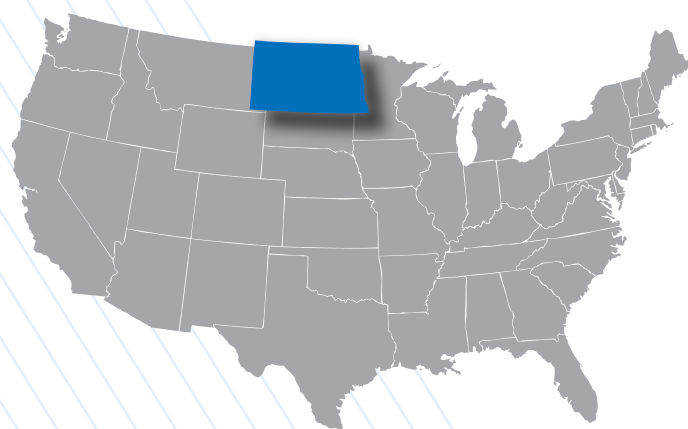
MEP • MANUFACTURING
EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP



North Dakota Manufacturing Extension Partnership (Dakota MEP)

Dakota MEP is committed to maximizing enterprise performance by providing companies with services and access to public and private resources that enhance growth, improve productivity, and expand capacity. Dakota MEP works with companies willing to invest in their future, to make improvements in the short term, and to position themselves to be long-term competitors both domestically and internationally.

A business climate conducive to “building the next generation of business today” requires committed leadership, a strong staff and strong network of resources. Dakota MEP will support a core staff dedicated to superior process and people development and also be responsible for leading an extended enterprise of partners and affiliates focused on creating and nurturing a superior business climate for companies in North Dakota. In some areas of service, this vision extends beyond the North Dakota boundaries to all companies seeking to improve; to become employers of choice, providers of choice and investors of choice.



For more information, contact

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THE MEP NETWORK

North Dakota MEP CLIENT IMPACTS

Impacts are based on clients receiving service in FY2012

Total Increased/
Retained Sales



\$29.9 Million

Total Increased/
Retained Jobs



382

New Client
Investments



\$9.6 Million

WWW.NIST.GOV/MEP • 1-800-MEP-4MFG

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE • NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF STANDARDS AND TECHNOLOGY • MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

CLIENT SUCCESS: STAFFES CORPORATION

“Working with the DMEP and investing in lean concepts is a manufacturing “best practice.” A growing company must invest in these best practices if they plan to survive in today’s competitive environment.”

Joe Rothschiller, President and COO

Building the Knowledge of The Workforce

Steffes Corporation began in the 1940's as a small manufacturing operation. The company grew into a steel fabrication business, manufacturing replacement snowmobile skis, hopper-bottom storage bins, furniture frames, and a variety of custom designed equipment. In the mid 1980's, the electric industry asked Steffes Corporation to research and design the first American made electric thermal storage (ETS) heating unit. Steffes entered the market with the highest quality product and today sets the standard for quality, safety, reliability, and performance. In 2007, Steffes Corporation became the leading manufacturer of 400 barrel oil tanks in the Bakken play in North Dakota. The company also offers its oil industry customers additional metal products for each oil site. Today, they continue to provide quality products and services for a diversified customer base. Steffes employs 225 people and has locations in Dickinson and Grand Forks, ND.

Situation:

Steffes Corporation was projecting significant sales growth and anticipated capacity concerns to meet the demand of the customers. The Dakota MEP, a NIST MEP affiliate, had developed the Lean Enterprise Certification Program (LECP) to facilitate the learning of lean concepts and enable employees to become Lean Bronze Certified. The company saw this as an opportunity to educate employees in these concepts that would assist us with the growth anticipated.

Solution:

Over the past five years, Steffes Corporation has had 43 employees participate in the LECP and 10 of them are currently Lean Bronze Certified with several others actively working on their portfolio. The skills taught during the program have enabled the company to have more employees educated on the benefit of lean and allowed them to implement improvement throughout the organization. The kaizen improvement events offered after the program, have significantly helped address constraints and eliminate waste.

Results:

- * Grew from \$18M to \$67M sales projected in 5 years

Grew from \$18M to \$67M
sales projected in 5 years